



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
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The One Who Watches Over Those Who Watch

Our dear colleague, Chaplain Cesar V. Buenaventura died in Pearl Harbor on July 16th due to complications after heart triple-bypass surgery. We grieve with his family and with the many chaplains and RPs who knew Cesar and had the opportunity to work with him.

His death reminds me of the words of Psalm 121:8, "The LORD watches over your coming and going both now and forevermore." Cesar was known for his willingness to go when called up. He deployed often, and whether afloat or ashore, he stood well his watch as a chaplain. I pray daily that all of us stand our watch well and bring honor to the memory of the chaplains who have gone before us. The American military has been blessed with chaplains who served with faith, courage, and conviction in all branches. And I know from personal experience, that our Navy Chaplain Corps is blessed with many such chaplains today.

The collective reputation of our Corps was established by the steadfast and often heroic service of the "Sea Padre" pioneers. That reputation is maintained and enhanced day by day in the acts of service of each individual chaplain serving today—in your service.

Each day offers new opportunities to stand well our watch: "Chaplain, can I talk to you for a minute?" "Chaplain, I got a Marine (or a Sailor or a Coast Guardsman) who needs to talk to you." "Chaplain, one of our troops just got killed in a car wreck and we need to make a CACO call on the spouse."

How we respond to requests for assistance determines, in part, how people see us standing our watch. When we stand well our watch, people know someone cares. When we stand well our watch, people know God cares. And this is true because we do not stand our watch alone.

God is watching over us as we watch over the religious needs of the men and women of the Sea Services. As God watched over the chaplains who have gone before us, so God watches over us. And occasionally, unpredictably, the watch is relieved early, as in Cesar's case this week. That possibility just reinforced for us that our responsibility is always to stand our watch faithfully—until properly relieved. I pray that the One

Who watches over us sees us watching well over the men and women entrusted to our spiritual care.

Sincerely,

Barry C. Black

BARRY C. BLACK
Rear Admiral, CHC, U.S. Navy
Chief of Navy Chaplains